

Message Text

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60

ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

PM-04 NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 /035 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:WNHOWELL:PDW

APPROVED BY NEA/ARN:TJCAROLAN

USIA:AHEIL (SUBSTANCE)

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O 292107Z SEP 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 242270

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, SY, CASC

SUBJECT: VOA CORRESPONDENT DOUGLAS ROBERTS IN LEBANON

REF: (A) BEIRUT 7758, (B) BEIRUT 7646

1. USIA REQUESTED AND RECEIVED BUREAU CLEARANCE FOR VOA CORRESPONDENT ROBERTS TO ENTER LEBANON THROUGH JOUNIEH TO COVER SARKIS INAUGURATION. APPROVAL WAS ON CONDITION THAT ROBERTS TRAVEL WITH OTHER FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS AND NOT RPT NOT ATTEMPT CROSS BEIRUT CONFRONTATION LINE.

2. CONTINUED PRESENCE OF ROBERTS IN LEBANON, PARTICULARLY IN ZONE OF ACTIVE CONFLICT, COMES AS SURPRISE TO US AS IT WAS OUR UNDERSTANDING HE WAS TO LEAVE AFTER COVERING INAUGURATION. USIA IS ATTEMPTING TO CONTACT ROBERTS ASAP TO INSTRUCT HIM TO LEAVE LEBANON. SHOULD HE AGAIN CONTACT EMBASSY, YOU SHOULD INFORM HIM THAT DEPARTMENT AND USIA REQUIRE HIS IMMEDIATE RPT IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE FROM LEBANON.

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3. WE HAVE CONTACTED USIA HERE TO STRESS IMPORTANCE OF

YOUR POINT (REFTEL A) THAT VOA EXERCISE EXTREME CAUTION IN BROADCASTING ANY MATERIAL IT MIGHT RECEIVE FROM ROBERTS RE SITUATION IN THE METN.

4. MORE GENERALLY, IT IS OUR CONTINUING INTENTION TO KEEP YOU INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF PLANS OF OFFICIAL TRAVELLERS TO LEBANON. IN CASE OF ROBERTS WE INADVERTENTLY FAILED TO DO SO AND ARE TAKING MEASURES TO ASSURE THAT SIMILAR LAPSES DO NOT OCCUR IN THE FUTURE. ROBINSON

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